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EXTEMPORANEOUS PREACHING.

The following extracts from an article on preaching, in the Christian Examiner for May, will be read with interest by that portion of our readers for whom they are designed:

It is becoming an important practical question whether the power of the pulpit would be promoted by the more frequent introduction of extemporaneous preaching. Before the Protestant Reformation, written sermons were almost unknown. In England they were established in the reign of Henry VIII, as a safeguard against impudence of speech or heresy of doctrine. They coincided with the subsequent intellectual character of Protestantism, and elaborate discourses from accomplished scholars soon displaced the off-hand harangues of ranting figures. Charles II. seems to have disliked the use of manuscripts in the pulpit, and issued a decree to the University of Cambridge, dated 1674, in which he commands the preachers to deliver their sermons without books under penalty of his Majesty's displeasure. Yet Charles probably had in view *memoriter*, rather than *extempore*, preaching. However, his decree has had no great influence upon the English church. Perhaps among other relics of other days, it may be discredited by the pious antiquarians who are now so busy in the mother country, and whose chief saint is of the Stuart race. Whatever be the cause, preaching without notes is becoming more common in England. In this country it is evidently increasing in prevalence, although the majority of educated preachers still use manuscripts, and reverse the example of the clergy of the Catholic church, who read their prayers and extemporize their sermons, by extemporizing their prayers and reading their sermons. The increase of popular gatherings for the discussion of political and philanthropic questions has raised up a host of ready extemporaneous speakers, who have tended to give a taste to the people for a more fervent and spontaneous manner than generally accompanies the use of a manuscript. The pastoral addresses of several ecclesiastical associations have expressly mentioned the evil that has accrued to their preachers, from the contrast of their deliberate composition and manner with the free and fervid utterance of the host of agents and lecturers who travel the country to declaim against our social evils. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church has recommended to its members to discontinue the use of manuscripts in the pulpit, and in some cases, we learn, the recommendation has not been without effect. The Methodists are earnestly discussing the best mode of preaching, and while some advocate written sermons, the majority firmly abide by the extemporaneous mode; and a sensible article in their Quarterly Review, from the pen of one of their most gifted preachers, disapproves even of the slightest brief being carried into the pulpit.

It is obviously becoming the duty of every minister to be independent of his manuscript, and acquire such a habit of extemporaneous speech, that he can use it whenever he chooses. There will be times when he will be much crippled and mortified unless he can do so, and not a mouth will pass that does not show him the convenience and power of the gift. We take no extreme ground; we make no war against written sermons, much less will we advocate *impromptu* preparation for pulpit, if preparation it can be called. A man must write well if he would speak correctly, and speak freely if he would write fluently. What Quintilian says upon this point in reference to the orator, is doubly true of the preacher. Perhaps it would be best for the reader speaker to write half his sermons and use his manuscript, unless he has the rare gift of remembering his own composition without the drudgery of learning it by rote, and can speak without the aid of a school-boy saying a lesson. We must have a habit of accurate and regular writing; else our literary culture is in great peril; and it is generally much better to preach from the manuscript than to try to remember it—a work much more difficult than to speak without trying to remember. As to *impromptu* preparation for the pulpit, if such there can be, it should be entirely condemned, unless in cases where necessity is the excuse. By extemporaneous preaching, we mean the utterance of premeditated thoughts in such language as presents itself at the time of speaking.

It will allow that this is the most natural and effective mode, other things being equal. A child perceives at once the difference in our tone, when we cease speaking to him and begin to read. His languid attention marks the effect of the transition. The same result appears in all popular meetings, where some of the delators read, and other speak as they are moved. Why should the pulpit be an exception to the general law, and a practice be held indispensable there that would be the ruin of the orator of the bar or senate-hall?

Almost all the objections brought against extemporaneous preaching are unjust, because directed against abuses rather than fair specimens of the art. No man should try to speak in the pulpit until he has learned the rudiments of the art. It is from the failure of those who have not learned, that the art is condemned by so many. Let men follow up the culture of extemporaneous preaching as assiduously as that of composition, and it will be found that there is no more difference between preachers in their faculty of speaking than of writing, and that all may learn to speak extemporaneously as easily at least as they learn to compose.

Indeed, the action of the mind in preparing for a speech, is far more natural than in the labor of composition. Thoughts present themselves much more spontaneously and fall into their proper places. They volunteer at the call of the living voice, whereas they must be forcibly impressed into the service of the pen. These volunteer troops are introduced sometimes rather too volubly to stand much serious service, but not infrequently they will prove themselves as solid as they are prompt. Henry Ware has so well exhibited the advantages of extemporaneous preaching that it is unnecessary to say much upon this point, although he has not spoken so much of the effect of this mode upon the speaker's preparation as upon the manner and effect of his delivery. We say, as we leave this branch of the subject, that we have no doubt, that if our young men who enter the ministry cultivated this habit as carefully as that of writing, and gave the same thought to their extemporaneous as to their written sermons, they would speak without notes as wisely as they write, and far more effectively, besides saving the time and labor that are given to the mechanical work of the pen. They will not indeed be able to treasure up for the moment, but most ministers have old sermons enough, and a few notes of the chief points of a discourse will suffice to call it to mind again, even in subsequent years.

Those who have practised extemporaneous preaching, must be aware that many dangers are incident to this mode, and some dangers such as are not usually considered. The liability or temptation to neglect careful preparation, and rely too much upon the inspiration of the moment; to run into exaggeration, and mistake warmth of blood for fervor of feeling, or strength of conviction; to suppose from the excitement of our own minds that we are interesting the audience as much as we interest ourselves; to commit sins against good taste by exhortations, reproaches, and appeals such as a cooler head

would condemn; to repeat the same words or ideas, to the weariness of the hearers; to ramble from subject to subject without unity, and continue speaking after we ought to stop; these are perils that the extemporaneous preacher understands better than his severest critics, for he is the greatest sufferer by them.

As to bodily fatigue and nervous exhaustion, it may be that there is more expenditure of strength in the extemporaneous than in the manuscript method. But the former gives a much more natural and healthful play to the system than the latter. Of any given number of preachers who might be selected to show the effects of the two modes of speaking upon the organs of the voice, we think that those who practise the former method would bear the more favorable testimony, and very few cases would be adduced in which easy extemporizers have been troubled with that scourge of the profession, *hoarseness*. Most persons can talk two hours with less fatigue of lungs and throat than is felt in reading a quarter of an hour. The same principle, must apply, in a measure, to public speaking. Yet nothing is more wearing to body as well as mind than to speak with anxiety, doubting whether we shall get through, and drifting about in the fog, uncertain of a landing-place. The preparation for extemporaneous speaking may be much more healthful than the task of writing. It is the sedentary labor and confinement of the study, that brings so many ministers to a premature grave. Extempore speaking turns the sedentary student into a cheerful participant. On a summer's day he may walk in a pleasant garden or shady grove, and find a pleasure in arranging for the next Sunday a sermon, that would have vexed his mind and body without measure, if he had been bent over his desk, the slave, not of the pen, but of the pen. There is something wrong in our clerical life. They that have the nobility of all professions ought not to prove by their languid and short lives, that they are at variance with the laws of nature, out of harmony with the regular order of Providence.

An exact method will prevent all anxiety.—The preacher should be far more careful in the arrangement of his subject for the extemporaneous than the written discourse. He should be sure of his main points and illustrations, and see his way clearly to the end. The end is the most difficult part, and therefore should be most carefully considered. Many men can make a very good speech in the main, ruin themselves at the close.—They remind one of a vessel which makes a most expeditious and satisfactory voyage, and at last puts the passengers in an agony of suspense by attempts to reach the wharf. She courses to and fro, and at last with great difficulty, and with many a thump, is moored to her resting place. How to end, is the danger of extemporizing. He is a preacher, however indefinite other parts of his discourse may be, he should be sure of an appropriate conclusion. He should trust to his stars for the beginning rather than the end of his discourse.—Sometimes indeed a better preparation will occur to him while speaking than before; but it is dangerous to rely on such casual visitations.

To avoid the danger of repetition from Sunday to Sunday—the great sin of extemporaneous preachers in the judgment of their hearers—care should be taken to select subjects that shall not tempt the preacher to routine. Vague exhortations and theologies of commonplaces should be avoided, and some topic from Scripture history or biography, some fact or illustration, should be taken that will be sure to give an air of freshness; and a careful division of his branches should make the discourse individual, and unlike former discourses.

It is sometimes the case, that men of remarkable powers of extemporaneous speaking weary their own congregations with the same discourses that thrill other congregations to the quick. The probable reason is, that a preacher's own people have sometimes been troubled by his intensity and exaggeration, and always remember some of his excessive expressions, and yet get tired of his discourses, and are borne along by the tide of spontaneous eloquence. Preachers therefore should beware of compromising their influence with the judicious of their congregations by any extravagances of speech, and should make it certain that good sense shall never fall a sacrifice to the craving for eloquence. Nothing wears so well as good sense. Eloquent folly may charm for a time, but good sense always resumes its place. It is very important, that whenever a minister is to address himself personally to his people, especially to rebuke their personal negligence, he should use well chosen language, and by being sure of all his points, should be able to scold and rebuke with the ease and fluency of uttering words that afterwards are coals of fire that burn his own conscience rather than influence their piety.

None of the writers upon the subject of extemporaneous preaching mention the study of the ancient classics as a part of the culture of the extempore speaker. Notwithstanding the prevalent disposition to deprecate their value now, we maintain that they are essential to a speaker's education, not so much as giving models of oratory, as supplying analogies and appropriate language. There is no mode of acquiring copiousness and precision of speech so good in the outset, as the habit of faithfully and elegantly rendering the Greek and Latin classics into appropriate English. The force of the original is apprehended, and the affluence of our own tongue mastered. This way of studying the dead languages has a worth that is forgotten by many who declaim against studies that have been their own great benefactors. It is a fact worthy of note, that all the great extempore orators have been good classical scholars. Eton, with its dead languages, has given no small share of living eloquence to the British Parliament.

Our New England has not been remarkable for extemporaneous eloquence in the pulpit. Our cautiousness and acute intellect do not favor such a spontaneous mode. Edwards produced his religiously rendered long sermons full of systematic divinity, without any of the orator's art. The fastidious scholarship of the early Liberal divines hardly allowed them to indulge in any adventurous flights. Yet there is nothing in the severest intellect of the most finished scholarship, that need shrink from free utterance of thought. The most profound and logical preacher of modern Germany never wrote his sermons, and it is only through the short-hand notes of his pupils that Schleiermacher's four volumes of discourses have been preserved to us. Robert Hall's most powerful and efficient efforts were extemporaneous. The advice of one of the most illustrious divines of the English Church, Bishop Burnet, is backed by his example. He always trusted to the moment for his language, and owed much of his power to this fact. His biographer mentions an occasion of great importance, when the regular preacher was taken sick, and the Archbishop of Canterbury called upon Dr. Burnet to enter the pulpit and supply the vacant place, which was done to the wonder and approval of all. The Archbishop declared that he had never heard a better sermon in his life.

But the great trouble with most preachers is, that they do not give time enough to the preparation of their sermons. This difficulty might certainly be obviated by economizing labor, and lessening the time spent with the pen in the drudgery of mechanical composition. If a minister must prepare two fresh sermons a week, he will be able to give

them both much more meditation by writing only one, and devoting to earnest thought the time spared from penning the other. No man should write more than one sermon a week, and one in a fortnight would perhaps come nearer the true rule.—Paley recommends once a month. But we are inclined to think that if this rule were adopted, sermons would not be better than now, since the ample time would rather encourage indolence and delay, than stimulate to higher achievement. Those preachers who write the smallest number in the course of a year are by no means the most exemplary models of fidelity to the highest standard of preaching. The hurry of a crowded week, and the tempting leisure of months, are alike perilous to faithful preparation. The hurry of the week may often be spared by quitting the drudgery of the pen, and faithfully preparing the outlines of an unwritten sermon. Yet no week should pass without careful exercise in composition.

For Zion's Herald and Wesleyan Journal.

A DONATION PARTY.

"IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE."

These St. Paul says were the words of Jesus.—The giver is here represented as being more happy than the receiver. This sentiment among the primitive Christians obtained and was carried out in practice. They made common stock of all their worldly goods, that distribution might be made to all that had need. The blessed Savior while on earth both in theory and practice created such an atmosphere of pure benevolence that his immediate followers felt constrained to follow his example, and so happy were they in this practice that they went from house to house, and did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. We find that Christians in every age since, when they have been brought to the verge of another world and was losing sight of this, have acted on the same principle. They have distributed to benevolent objects at their death by *thousands* what they had acquired by *years*, by *hundreds*, or monthly by *tens*. Their whole life of duties is presented before them and must be performed in the short space of a day. How much better it would have been for them to have watched for opportunities to have secured this blessedness monthly, than to have lost all but one at the end of life, and that much neutralized by former neglects. How strange it is that worldly men will carefully watch every opportunity to add to their capital stock even from 10 to 15 per cent, when Christians are often in a situation to increase their 100 fold, and yet neglect the means to obtain it. There are many reasons why "it is more blessed to give than to receive." One is, God has so arranged the moral government of his creatures that every benevolent act is to receive its own reward. Even "a cup of cold water given to a Disciple" (where they have no more to give) "will not lose a reward." Another reason is, it is obeying a command of God. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." It always gives pleasure to obey. "In keeping the command there is great reward." When we feel disposed to give by our own free will and accord, without any constraint, the legitimate result of such an act is to give us a hope that this benevolent feeling springs from a principle within that we must have received from above, as every perfect gift comes from above. A sincere desire to do good to souls and bodies of men to the utmost of our ability must spring from a good heart, the great secret of the whole must be this. If we receive of others it can only be the things of this world, and there will still be left an ocean void the world can never fill. But if we bestow upon others, we act upon one of the cardinal principles of our holy religion, *goodness*, which is also one of the first fruits of the Spirit, and this will produce the blessedness of peace and joy in the soul.—Again it is said, "he that watereth shall be watered himself." If we water others as fast as it flows from our lips, and we get galled and scorched, and if we keep thus pumping, no doubt there will "be in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life." We had the pleasure to see those principles carried out in our own village not long since. We had within our borders a poor widow who was left with little children to support and nothing wherewith to supply their returning wants, except what she could get by washing and other little jobs furnished by the neighbors. Not long before there had been a donation party for a minister. Some one thought it might be as benevolent an act to supply a poor widow's wants by a donation party as to supply a minister's, and so it was done. A sincere desire to do good to souls and bodies of men to the utmost of our ability must spring from a good heart, the great secret of the whole must be this. 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HERALD AND JOURNAL.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7, 1844.

Correspondence.

NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE.

CONTINUANCE OF SATURDAY'S SESSION.
Received on trial—Isaac J. P. Collier, G. W. Weeks, R. S. Rust, Loranus Crowell, J. T. Pattee, Nelson E. Cobleigh, C. L. Eastman, J. H. T. Wombly, W. R. Clark, Samuel Tupper, C. R. Foster, D. E. Chapin.

Leonard Frost was re-admitted.
D. S. King's relation was changed from Supernumerary to Supernumerary.

Daniel Fillmore agent of Wesleyan University reported that there was subscribed within the bounds of the N. E. and Providence Conferences, \$10,011.58; \$4,000 of which is paid. About 6,000 was subscribed within the bounds of the New England Conference.—Dr. Olin made a few pertinent remarks, stating the pressing necessities of the University, and its dependence upon the prompt and efficient efforts of the Conferences for its continued existence.

The report of the Committee on the Wesleyan University was read, which recommended that the members individually pledge themselves to pay the interest on \$5,000, until an agent should be procured. —Pledges were called for, and in a few moments, the interest on \$5,000 was pledged, and \$24,000, some pledging the interest on \$200, some \$100, &c.

Committee on Building and Furnishing Parsonages reported. Their report may be expected in the Herald. Conference adjourned.

Br. E. T. Taylor preached in the evening from 1 Peter v. 10, in his own peculiarly eloquent style—Those who have heard Br. Taylor may form some conception of it, but to those who have never had that privilege it would be useless to describe it.

SUNDAY 28.

The Sabbath was a day of peculiar and special interest. The exercises consisted in a prayer meeting at 5 o'clock, A. M., lovefeast at 8 o'clock, preaching at 10 o'clock, by Bishop James, in the Methodist Church, and E. T. Taylor in the Congregational Church. Preaching at 2 o'clock by Dr. Olin, at 5 1/2 by Dr. Pittman, and in the evening a Temperance Address at the Congregational Church, by E. T. Taylor. The Lovefeast was marked by deep religious feeling and moving relations of some of the old fathers who have seen Zion in its infancy.

I have attempted a sketch of Bishop James' sermon, premising that I endeavor to retain the ideas only, not making the author responsible for the phraseology in which it is expressed.

Jer. ix. 3.—"But they are not valiant for the truth." The enormity of the sin mentioned in the text is shown by its being specified among the numerous sins named in the context; its enormity is further seen by the punishment threatened. Theme—*Valor for the truth*. I. What is the truth? 1. Opposition to deceit.—Prov. xii. 19. 2. Substance of the former dispensation: "The law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ." 3. Doctrines of the Gospel.—Gal. iii. 1. 4. Entire Scriptures: "Sanctify them through the truth; thy word is truth." 5. Used to describe Jesus Christ. "I am the way, the truth and the life." II. *Valor for the truth* defined. To be valiant for the truth is to be bold, dauntless and heroic.

1. To maintain distinctive truth. One reason of our fathers' success was their adherence to the distinctive doctrines of Justification, Sanctification, &c. 2. To maintain by teaching and practice all the precepts of the Gospel. Value implies, 1. A knowledge of the truth. 2. That the truth be embraced with all the heart. 3. A profession of the truth. 4. An unyielding defence of the truth. III. Who are guilty of the sin in the text. 1. Those who will not learn the truth. 2. Those who will not profess the truth. 3. Those who do nothing, and give nothing for the truth. IV. What are the motives which should cause us to exercise valor for the truth? 1. Immortality of the truth. 2. Because the truth has accomplished much. Has changed man's lost estate into one of hope: changed his condition and conduct. It has made men happy—happy in dying—made heaven's glories more glorious. It has taken our nature and glorified it in the person of Jesus Christ. It has associated men with angels, and multiplied the songs of heaven. 3. The victories of the truth accomplished by the Apostles, early Christians, &c. 4. Influence of examples of valor in the cause of the truth. Christ, Apostles, Luther, Wesley, our fathers. 5. *God is with us and the Holy Ghost is our Helper*. Application 1. To sinners. 2. To Christians. The discourse produced a deep, and we trust, lasting impression upon the large audience who heard.

The Bishop proceeded to act apart eleven young men to the office of deacon in the church of Christ.—The effect of the sermon was more than sustained—it was deepened by this solemn ceremony. The candidates and most of the audience wept freely. We noticed with peculiar interest the countenances of two of our oldest ministers while each gazed upon a son under the ordaining hand of the Bishop. Their looks seemed to say, I have seen the great goodness of God in this thing; my heart's fondest desire concerning my son is accomplished. The sons were in tears and one of the parents turned away weeping like a child.

The sermon in the afternoon by Dr. Olin was founded on 1 Cor. i. 23-25. I dare not lengthen this report by attempting any more sketches of sermons, though I had taken notes for that purpose. The Doctor held up the preaching of "Christ crucified" by illustrations, arguments and moving appeals to the heart, until "Christ crucified" seemed to us, if never before, the only subject worth preaching. Its intellectual character was worthy of its author, but it was forgotten in the spirit of childlike simplicity and unaffected holiness which pervaded it.

It is no small praise to bestow upon Dr. Pittman's sermon, to say it interested evidently the audience after most of them had been in the house about 8 hours in course of the day. It was founded on Isaiah xxxii. 17. After the discourse a missionary collection and subscriptions were taken up by the Westfield Society for their annual subscription, which amounted to \$143. The weariness of the flesh forbade our hearing Br. Taylor's Temperance Address, but we know not how he could have had a higher compliment than was given him by a crowded audience in a house of the largest dimensions, from 8 to nearly 10 o'clock, after most of that audience had attended so protracted a public service.

Thus ended not only one of the best Conference Sabbaths, but one of the most profitable we ever experienced.

Z. A. MUDGE.

MONDAY 29.

Br. Tippet, book agent, was introduced, and offered a few remarks on the state of the Book Concern.

A resolution was passed recommending a more general attention to kneeling in public worship, and ordered to be printed in the Herald.

Geo. Landon was added to the committee on the Wesleyan University.

The following brethren were introduced. Stockton and Kellogg, New York Conference; Lamberton and Alderman, Providence Conference; J. T. Peck and M. L. Scudder, Troy Conference; Bontecou, Ohio Conference. The Conference proceeded to the examination of character.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Rev. Mr. Beckwith, agent of the American Peace Society was introduced, and presented in a clear, conciliatory speech the claims of this Christian cause.

A resolution, concurring with a resolution of the New York Conference, to restore to the Discipline Mr. Wesley's rule on the use of ardent spirit, passed—75 agreeing—none dissenting.

Resolutions and a preamble from the Committee on Temperance, taking high ground on this subject, passed. They will appear among the published resolutions.

By a unanimous rising vote, the Conference extended an invitation to Bishop Hedding to take up his residence within our bounds. Bishop H. expressed his unabated attachment to New England, and his desire to make his home among us as soon as practicable. The same invitation was extended to Bishop James, who expressed in a feeling manner his pleasure at receiving the request, but could not at present comply.

Conference adjourned.

Conference Missionary Anniversary was held in the evening.

Rev. J. T. Peck, of the Troy Conference, whose speech at the General Conference in behalf of New England Methodists, is held in grateful remembrance by us, made the first speech. He observed, on rising, that his remarks were intended as a preface to those which were to follow, and it was expected that a preface would be short. His speech proved to be short and to the point. Bishop James followed, remarking, as he rose, that the preface was sometimes the best part of the book; at any rate, in this case he would have been pleased if it had been longer. The Bishop's remarks were pertinent and beautifully illustrated. Dr. Pittman followed, and a collection was taken of \$172, making about \$365.00 raised during the Conference. No pledges for the coming year were called for, the brethren no doubt fully resolving to raise all the missionary money possible.

TUESDAY 30.

The Sabbath School Report was presented and ordered to be printed in the Herald. The readers will perceive that the report speaks of a favorable state of the cause, with the exception of the number of conversions, but very few being reported. We commend this part of the report to the attention of the superintendents and teachers, and would particularly request that it be a matter of discussion in the teacher's meeting, and more especially of humility and prayer.

Report of the Preacher's Aid Society was received. It will be seen that the Society has received \$754.50. The committee stated that applications for relief had been made exceeding by more than \$200 their means. The small receipts of the Society called out two eloquent speeches from brethren E. T. Taylor and A. D. Merrill, setting forth the sacred claims of the old out and venerable fathers, whose trembling limbs admonish us that what is done for them must be done speedily. We wish the whole church could have heard these appeals, they would not fail to send up to the Conference a contribution from every member, as God has blessed them, and swell the treasurer's receipts from \$700 to \$3000 at least. There need not be a large contribution from any one person, only let every one give something. Can we answer a good conscience to God if we do not? Let an enlightened sense of duty answer.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

At the opening of the Conference, John W. Hardy signified his wish to withdraw from the M. E. Church. His name is returned withdrawn.

The Conference proceeded to consider the proposition of the General Conference to alter the 6th restrictive rule as to permit a proportionate division of the property with the South in case of separation. J. Porter, J. T. Peck of the Troy Conference, Reuington and King have given their reasons for concurrence; Adams, J. A. Merrill and Husted their reasons in opposition.

Leaving the Conference to jog along as it may in this debate, we will endeavor to give the reader a glance at our excellent place of assembling. The Westfield church is new, and one of the finest in the connection. It is 84 feet by 63, contains 116 pews, and will seat of course comfortably on the floor 700 people. There were at least 1000 crowded into it on the Sabbath. The interior arrangement is neat without extravagance, and in good architectural taste. In the organ gallery, at the front end, the society have placed an organ of moderate size and rich tone, in the opinion of judges in such matters. We were about to let slip a decided opinion concerning this innovation upon Methodist practices, but recollecting that there are "many men of many minds," and that not a few of the correspondents of the Herald have a relish for controversy on these subjects, we forbore, without feeling any necessity of assuring our readers that they will not suffer very great loss in consequence. The basement contains an excellent lecture room, two stores, and a tenement for a small family, the rent of which is gradually removing the considerable remaining debt. The congregation we understand is large, nearly all the pews being sold or rented, and the number in the church about 240. Upon the whole we do not know of a society more highly blest than this in most respects which afford a people the means of usefulness; and, with ardent and uniform piety, which we trust they will ever seek as that indispensable qualification without which a church will become a hissing stock and a curse, they may spread the light and power of the gospel through this whole region.

After taking a glance at this pleasant village we will return to the Conference. Westfield is about ten miles west of Springfield, on the railroad route to Albany. The situation of the principal village is singularly beautiful, being nearly surrounded by a range of hills, forming a kind of basin which Indian tradition says was once the bed of a lake which broke away from its confinement on the east side and emptied itself into the Connecticut river. The gap in the hills on that side, its peculiar formation, and the interesting fact that trees are found in some places far below the surface of the ground, confirms this tradition. This location was a favorite resort of the Indians when "the wild fox dug his hole unscared," throughout this whole country, and no doubt he returned reluctantly away before the intrusive approach of the white man.

The people of Westfield have tested a little of the sorrows of unsuccessful manufacturing speculations. A paper mill and a glass factory have successively been tried and failed. The leading business of the place now is the manufacturing of whips, which has been established nearly thirty years. We were informed that there were about 1000 female operatives employed in this business by the factories of this town, besides a large number of men. We invite those who think little skill is required in making a whip to visit Westfield and make an examination of the mode of operation, especially of a little machine—we like to have said of intelligence—which plays the coverings upon the whip handles. We should as soon think of describing, landsman as we are, the running rigging of a man-of-war. It does a neat piece of work without muttering, just as it is directed to do, and what could intelligence do more? Soberly, the sight of it is worth a trip all the way from Boston to those who are curious in these matters. It is equal in ingenuity to any piece of machinery we ever saw, not excepting that which of a thing at Lowell which makes wire teeth cards pretty much on its own responsibility. What if these machines should set up for themselves by and

by there would be a sorry competition with the hand-work operations! It is true they are getting amazingly independent of their owner's interference.

The New England Conference Anti-Slavery Society held its anniversary Tuesday evening. We will not anticipate by any remarks the full report of the secretary of the meeting.

WEDNESDAY 31.

Conference continued the consideration of the alteration of the 6th restrictive rule. After a little debate, the previous question was moved, and the question taken by yeas and nays. Yeas, 52; nays, 22.

The following brethren were received on trial, in addition to those hitherto reported. W. A. Braman, Homer Clark, Wm. Bardwell, R. P. Buffington, Benj. Paine's name was again put upon the supernumerated list.

The Conference was occupied the remaining part of the session in passing resolutions and hearing reports, which we need not further notice, as they will be published so far as interesting to the public.

We were ready for adjournment towards the close of the afternoon. Bishop Hedding offered a few remarks, after which Bishop James arose with feelings which he evidently tried in vain to suppress. He remarked that this was the most burdened and responsible hour of his life, yet full of causes of gratitude.—The whole scene of this Conference, their kindness, their new and trying duties would be as clearly impressed upon his mind until the day of his death as the circumstances of his conversion. He affectionately addressed the younger members of the Conference, spoke of his own and the presiding elders' anxiety in making the appointments, and his solicitude that they should prove for the good of the church. Br. Joseph A. Merrill then led in a fervent manner an address to the throne of Grace, commending us, in our work, to the grace of God; after which Bishop James read in a distinct voice our appointments, amid the profoundest silence, and we scattered for a year—by the blessing of God—of unequalled success in winning souls.

Z. A. MUDGE.

APPOINTMENTS

OF THE NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE.
[The appointments included in brackets compose one Quarterly Conference.]

Boston District—Thomas C. Peirce, P. E.

Boston—
" Bennett Street—J. D. Bridge.
" Richmond Street—Z. A. Mudge.
" East Boston—J. A. Merrill.
" Bromfield Street and Odeon—S. Remington—one to be supplied.

" Marine's Church—E. T. Taylor.
" Church Street—Miner Raymond.
" South Boston—Joseph Whitman.
" Roxbury—John W. Merrill.

" North Russell Street—George Landon.
" East Cambridge—Stephen Cushing.
" Charlestown—Jacob Sanborn.
" Chelsea—Mark Stahl.

" Chelsea—H. P. Hall.
" Walpole—Wm. R. Bagnall.
" Cambridgeport—Isaac A. Savage.
" Waterdown—Thomas W. Tucker.

" Waltham—David Kilburn.
" Newton Upper Falls—Joseph Dennison.
" Chelsea—Charles K. True.

" Melrose Mission—George Pickering.
" Melrose Center—George W. Frost.
" Melrose North—Daniel Richards.

Lynn—
" South Street and Common—J. B. Husted, Loranus Crowell.
" Wood End—S. A. Cushing.

" Saugus—Wm. Rice.
" Danvers—Rubeen Ransom.
" Salem—D. K. Merrill.
" North Salem—J. S. Gridley.

" Haverhill—John S. Springer.
" Newburyport—B. K. Peirce.
" Tisbury—L. P. Collier.
" Newbury—Horace Montfort.

" Gloucester Parish and Harbor—Joel Steele, C. R. Foster.
" Worcester District—James Porter, P. E.

Worcester—
" Worcester—Amos Binney.
" Millbury—Phineas Crandall.
" Grafton—Leonard Frost.
" Holliston—Amos Walton.

" Hopkinton—Miss—Simon Putnam.
" Wrentham—Henry E. Hempstead.
" North Wrentham—R. S. Stone.
" Suttonville—Willard Smith.

" Southbury—To be supplied.
" Meriden and Hartford—Benj. F. Lambard.
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THE CAPTIVE JEWS.

The golden sun was fast declining
The western horizon; and its beams
Cast a soft, mellow light o'er the plains
Of the Holy Land; while from the hills
The shepherds came, with their bleating flocks,
Here rolled the deep Euphrates in its power,
And in the distance might be seen the vases,
And by the water's side there at a group
Whose and mournful aspect showed that they
Were men of sorrow. And upon the loath
Of the far weeping willows hang their harps;
And their deep grief gave vent in accents full
Of pensive woe.

O Jerusalem,

I never will efface thee from my heart,
And in my bosom thy fond love shall reign,
Long as I draw the vital breath of life;
Until my hand shall lose its cunning, and
My mind be tormented with its memory,
This lamp of day be cold in death,
I shall forget thee, city of my God.

When they remembered Zion, then they wept,
For tears the place where once they worshipped God,
But now it was a desert and a waste land,
Beneath a heathen tyrant's dreadful rod.

LYMAN W. DIXMORE.

Royalton, Vt., July 28, 1844.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

NATHANIEL PATRIDGE died in Littleton, N. H., May 29, aged 76 years. He was converted to God in 1820, and soon joined the M. E. Church, of which he remained a worthy member until his death. His end was peaceful. During his protracted confinement to the house, more than a year, he was patient and submissive. His soul was stayed upon God, and there he found support.

N. Littleton, July 27, 1844. S. P. WILLIAMS.

SISTER EMILY R., daughter of Widow Nancy Gilman, of Hallowell, Me., sweetly fell asleep in Jesus on the morning of the 13th inst., aged 25. She was received into the M. E. Church in 1837, and remained a worthy member until called to the church triumphant. The last five years of her life were years of extreme suffering, but the power of entire sanctification made her triumphant in suffering. A more calm, patient, triumphant, holy Christian I never saw. Of course her end was peace; it could not have been otherwise, as the termination of a life so devoted to God. Christian, would you like her like her live in a state of constant consecration to God. D. B. RANDALL.

Hallowell, Me., July 25, 1844.

CHILD'S DEPARTMENT.

LEARNING TO THINK.

"Here, Charles! Stop a moment, will you? I want to speak with you."
"I can't, now, Henry; for I haven't had a run with my hoop a long time."
"But I want to tell you something. Here! I haven't seen you since you came back from the country. Your iron hoop runs along this hard ground capriciously. Can you tell what it is that makes it go along so capriciously?"
"What is it? To be sure I can. It is my stick. The harder I hit it, the faster it goes."
"But I hit this post as hard as you like with your stick, and it will not stir from the place where it stands."
"No! that is because it is stuck fast in the ground."
"Younder is a post lying down in the road; hit that, then, with your stick, and see if it will run along like your hoop."
"I know it will not, because it is so heavy; it is of no use to hit that."
"Well, then, here is my pocket handkerchief; let us see how you can knock that along. Surely that will not be too heavy for you."
"No; but it will be too light though! The handkerchief would not run along at all."
"The post is too heavy, and the pocket handkerchief is too light; you are hard to please; but suppose I put a big stone in the handkerchief, and make it heavier, you will bowl it along then with your stick?"
"No, that I could not."
"And why not?"
"Why, because—because it would not run along at all."
"But can you tell me the reason why it will not run along at all?"
"I dare say not; for we boys seldom do think about any thing but our play, unless we are obliged to do it. But now let me tell you what I wanted to say to you."
"Ay, do, and then I'll be off again, for younder is Edward Palmer with his hoop; and I want to join him. What is it?"
"Why, do you know, that I am learning to think!"
"Learning to think! I never heard of such a thing!"
"I dare say not; but for all that, I only wish that I had begun years ago. I have learned more the last three months than I did all last year, I am sure."
"But where's the good of learning to think?"
"Where's the good? What a question! But I dare say that I should have asked it myself three months ago, and therefore I ought not to be surprised at you. If people had not thought about things, we should never have had the comforts and pleasures we now enjoy; the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the houses we live in, have all been the subjects of much thought; and, our very plays too. Why does the pig-top spin, the ball bounce, the humming-top make a noise, and the kite fly in the air? I hardly think you can answer me one of these questions. Now, if you had learned to think, you would be able to answer them all!"
"Should I?"
"Yes, that you would; but instead of being able to answer them now, you cannot tell me, I dare say, why a batdore will not fly in the air as well as a kite. It is something of the same form; why will it not rise in the air?"
"It's too heavy, a great deal."
"Too heavy! Why a large kite is as heavy as two batdorees; and that cannot be the reason."
"I can't say, then?"
"And for that very reason you should learn to think. Now, try to find out why your kite does not go up higher in the air when you have let out all your string."
"Because the string holds it fast, and keeps it from going up higher."
"Then, how is it, if your string breaks, instead of your kite going up higher, it comes tumbling down directly?"
"Yes, I can tell that, I am sure. Can you?"
"Yes, I can, and a hundred other things that, three months ago, I knew nothing about. I am older than you, and ought to know more; but if you would learn to think, what is now hard for you to understand would soon become easy. Thinking people have a great advantage over others, for they are much wiser; they can give better advice, and assist others; for they know the best way of doing things, and the proper time when to do them. If you wanted to know how many grains of corn there are in a bag of wheat, how should you find it out?"
"Count them, to be sure."
"That would be one way, but not the way a thinking person would set about it. Why, if you counted two hundred every minute, and kept it up day and night for a whole week, you would hardly be able to get to the end of it."

"How would you set about it then? It's a puzzle to me how it could be done without counting."
"I would first weigh an ounce of wheat out of the bag, and count the number of grains in that one ounce. Then I would weigh the whole bag together to see how many ounces there were in all. If, after that, I multiplied the number of grains in one ounce by the number of ounces in the whole bag, it would give me the exact amount of grains altogether; and this might be done, if a large pair of scales were near, in ten minutes or a quarter of an hour."
"I should never have thought of that plan, however; but what's the use of learning to count the grains in a bag of wheat?"
"Just the same use as there is in learning to do a sum; it teaches us to reckon in the quickest and best way. There would be no good in a boy's learning the alphabet, only that it enables him to read afterward, and there would be but little advantage in learning to write copies in a copy-book, if it did not fit us to write letters, bills of parcels, and all other things, all through our lives."

"Well, that plan of counting the grains is a capital one."
"It was not hit upon without thought, depend upon it. Some time ago, I heard a thoughtless cottager, who, to save a crop of grass that had grown on the old ditch of his cottage, was trying all manner of contrivances to get a cow that belonged to him up to the roof of his cottage to eat the grass."
"And how did he manage it at last?"
"Why, a neighbor of his, who had learned to think, told him, that though he could not get the cow up to the grass, yet he might, perhaps, manage to cut the grass, and bring it down to the cow; and this plan was adopted without difficulty."

"Ah! ah! What a foolish cottager he must have been."
"He had never learned to think. I read a story yesterday about a mischievous monkey that, after doing much damage, ran up a thin, tall tree, and took shelter in the top branches. Two men undertook to catch him. One of them had learned to think, and the other had not. The thoughtless man climbed up the tree as far as he could; but he was obliged to come down again, for the thin branches would not bear his weight. The thinker then stepped forward, but instead of climbing the tree, he set to work busily with his axe, and soon brought down the tree and the mischievous monkey to the ground."

"Capital! capital! So poor pug was taken at last. I begin to have a notion, that 'learning to think' is a capital thing, and I should like to talk a little more with you about it another time."
"Well, then, be off with your hoop now, for I see that Palmer is waiting for you. No doubt, I shall see you to-morrow, and then 'learning to think' shall be the subject of our conversation."—London Child's Companion.

SELECTIONS.

RICHARD CECIL.

We gave a condensed biographical notice recently of Sir William Jones, and we now extract another, not less interesting, of a man greatly distinguished for his piety and usefulness, and well known to American as well as English readers. He was born in London, in 1784, and his mother was a "dissenter of real piety." He became a distinguished minister of the Gospel, and from the many interesting portions of his history, we select the following, as being of special interest to parents.

Richard Cecil, of London, when but a young man, had pursued a bold and determined career, till sunk in sin, hardening himself in infidelity, and stilling the same principles into others, there seemed no prospect of any change. His excellent mother, however, had performed her part, and still remembered that it was good, not only to pray aloud, but not to faint or desist upon any account. At last, one night he lay contemplating the case of his mother:

"I see," said he within himself, "two unquestionable facts: first, My mother is greatly afflicted in circumstances, body and mind; and yet I see that she cheerfully hears up under all, by the support she derives from constantly repining to her secret and her Bible; secondly, That she has a closet spring of comfort, of which I know nothing; while I, who give an unbounded loose to my appetites, and seek pleasure by every means, seldom or ever find it. If, however, there is such a secret in religion, why may I not find it as well as my mother?" He instantly rose and began to pray, but was soon damped, by recollecting that much of his mother's comfort seemed to arise from her faith in Christ. Now, thought he, "this Christ I have ridiculed; He stands much in my way, and can form no part of my prayers." In utter confusion he lay down again; but, in process of time, conviction of sin continuing, his difficulties were gradually removed, his objections answered. He now listened to those admonitions of his mother, which he had before affected to receive with pride and scorn; yet they had fixed themselves in his heart like a barbed arrow; and though the effects were concealed from her observation, yet tears would fall from his eyes as he passed along the street, from the impression she had made on his mind. Now he would discourse with her, and hear her without outrage, which revived her hopes, especially as he then attended the public worship of God. Thus he made some progress, but felt no small difficulty in separating from his favorite connections. Light, however, broke into his mind, till at last he discovered, that Christ Jesus, so far from "standing in the way," he was once thought, was indeed the way, the truth, and the life, to all who come unto God by Him.

After such a change it is not wonderful that Mr. Cecil should have written and spoken with so much pathos on the influence of the parental character. "Where parental influence does not convert," he would say, "it hammers; it hangs on the wheels of evil. I had a pious mother who dropped things in my way. I could never rid myself of them: I was a professed infidel; but then I liked to be an infidel in company, rather than when alone: I was wretched when by myself. These principles and maxims and data spoiled my piety." Again he says, "I find in myself another evidence of the greatness of parental influence. I detect myself, to this day, in laying down maxims in my family, which I took up at three or four years of age, because I could possibly know the reason of them." Besides, parental influence must be great, because God has said it shall be so.

The parent is not to stand reasoning and calculating. God has said that his character shall have influence; and so this appointment of Providence becomes often the punishment of a wicked man. Such a man is a complete selfish. I am weary of hearing such men talk about their "family"—and their "family"—they "must provide for their family." Their family has no place in their real regard; they push for themselves. But God says, "No! you think your children shall be so and so; but they shall be rods for your own backs. They shall be your curse. They shall rise up against you." The most common of all human complaints is, "Parents groaning under the vices of their children! This is all the effect of parental influence."

A WONDERFUL CONVERSION.

There was, some years ago, not far from this place, a very gifted preacher, who for several years preached with great earnestness and success the doctrine of the cross; but who, on that very account, was violently opposed. One of his opponents, a well-informed person, who had for a long time absent himself from the church, thought, one Sunday morning, that he would go and hear the gloomy man once more, to see whether his

preaching might be more tolerable to him than it had been heretofore. He went; and that morning the preacher was speaking of the narrow way, which he did not make either narrower or broader than the word of God describes it. "A new creature in Christ, or eternal condemnation," was the theme of his discourse, and he spoke with power, and not as a mere learned reasoner. During the sermon, the question forced itself upon his hearer's conscience—"How is it with myself? Does this man declare the real truth? If he does, what must inevitably follow from it?" This thought took such a hold upon him, that he could not get rid of it amidst any of his engagements or amusements. But it became from day to day more and more troublesome, more and more penetrating, and threatened to imber every joy of his life; so that at last he thought he would go to the preacher himself, and ask him, upon his conscience, if he were convinced of the truth of that which he had lately preached.

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